

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 12, 2007 has been carefully considered. Claims 8, 16 and 26 have been amended. Claims 8, 10, 11, 14, 16-18 and 26 are in this application.

Support for the amendment to claims 8, 16 and 26 is found throughout the specification and in particular on page 4, lines 25-28, and page 11, lines 16-24. No new matter has been added.

The previously presented claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious in view of The Food of India ("India") in combination with U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2003/0044488 to Roskam et al.

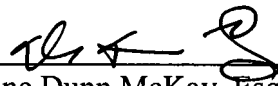
The India reference describes batter coated vegetables in which vegetables are dipped in a batter of chickpea flour. As noted by the Examiner, India does not teach or suggest washing of the food prior to coating it with batter. The Examiner indicated that the concept of blanching potatoes is an obvious washing treatment. Applicants respectfully disagree.

In Roskam et al., blanching is used to remove soluble sugars and avoid browning. As known to one of ordinary skill in the art, blanching refers to scalding food briefly, typically to cause to turn white or become pale. In contrast, the invention defined by the present claims provides a washing step with distilled water for a predetermined amount of time of at least ten minutes. Applicants submit that it has been found that blanching removes impurities and can improve the process of the present invention. In the present invention, the washing step is used to make the chickpea coat sufficiently so that the sugars do not form acrylamide. In contrast, the blanching step of Roskam et al. does not provide sufficient washing of the vegetables to reduce acrylamide formation. Rather, Applicants submit that blanching enhances sugar release and therefore can worsen the formation of acrylamide on cooking. Accordingly, Roskam et al. teaches away from the present invention. Applicants submit that it is unexpected that the combination of a washing step and a coating with chickpea flour can control production of acrylamide and that it is only in hindsight that the Examiner can suggest that blanching performs a washing step.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and request that all claims be allowed. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should she believe that this would expedite prosecution of this application. It is believed that no fee is required. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2165.

Respectfully submitted,

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Diane Dunn McKay, Esq.
Reg. No. 34,586
Attorney for Applicant

MATHEWS, SHEPHERD, McKAY & BRUNEAU, P.A.
29 Thanet Road, Suite 201
Princeton, NJ 08540
Tel: 609 924 8555
Fax: 609 924 3036